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SUBJECT: KOSOVO: PRESIDENT SEJDIU MEETS AMBASSADOR RICE

Classified By: Ambassador Susan Rice for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY. The President of Kosovo, Fatmir Sejdiu, asked Ambassador Rice on March 2 to help Kosovo obtain recognition from additional states, particularly from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Pakistan and OIC members; and to help ensure that like-minded states, including non-European states, submit briefs to the International Court of Justice in support of Kosovo's position on its 2008 declaration of independence. President Sejdiu welcomed the recent deployment of the EU's EULEX rule of law mission, and said he would not reopen discussions with Belgrade on SYG Ban's six point dialogue or on Kosovo's status. Sejdiu reaffirmed that he would soon put a representative in New York to engage directly with UN missions. Ambassador Rice affirmed U.S. continuing support for Kosovo's independence and obtaining recognitions, reinforced the need for a Kosovar representative in New York to develop personal relationships with UN missions, and encouraged Sejdiu to broaden Kosovo's relationship with the UN beyond DPKO. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu told Ambassador Rice on March 2 that he was pleased with his early and warm reception in Washington by the new administration, and thanked her for the leading role played by the U.S. and the U.S. Mission to the UN in Kosovo's independence. Sejdiu said that in the year since Kosovo's independence, Kosovo had been given a chance to prove itself, and had adopted a constitution and a number of laws in accordance with the plan presented by UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari. Kosovo had also developed excellent relations with all of its neighbors, except for Serbia, which was still trying to exert pressure on Kosovo to destabilize it.

13. (C) President Sejdiu had been pleased, he said, to receive reaffirmation in Washington of the administrations's willingness to help build support for additional countries to recognize Kosovo, and he asked Ambassador Rice to help in New York with UN Permpreps, specifically mentioning members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Sejdiu thought Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt could be convinced to recognize Kosovo with some encouragement from the United States, and that other OIC members would then follow the lead of these countries. He also asked Rice to weigh in with Pakistan and Brazil. Ambassdaor Rice reaffirmed U.S. support for Kosovo's independence and unquestioned sovereignty, and offered to continue to work with Kosovo to obtain recognition by more member states. She said she thought recognitions would come faster if the Kosovars were to establish a permanent presence in New York, since success at the UN often depends on the strength of strong personal relationships. Sejdiu said that he planned to put a representative in New York soon.

14. (C) The Kosovo President thought it would also be important for as many like-minded states as possible to submit written statements to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by the April 17, 2009 deadline on the question of the legality of Kosovo's declaration of independence.

Between 10-12 countries from Europe had confirmed that they would submit briefs in Kosovo's favor, he said, but it would be important to get like-minded countries outside of Europe, such as Japan, Malaysia, Australia or Panama to submit briefs as well. Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic had sent letters to over 80 countries asking them to weigh in on Serbia's behalf. Sejdiu believed that a written brief from Japan would be especially important, since a Japanese judge would be among those sitting on the panel. The President understood that Japanese legal experts had been preparing a brief, but that Japan had not yet made a decision whether to submit it. Sejdiu said he had spoken to the Japanese Ambassador to the United States about the issue during his recent visit to Washington. Kosovo had also made a direct request to Kosovo's International Steering Group (ISG) to submit briefs on Kosovo's behalf. He also thought the February 16 ruling of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) against five former Serbian officials for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Kosovo would help Kosovo's case in the ICJ. Sejdiu thought Serbia had not yet come to grips with its responsibility, and believed the government was still protecting criminals from the Kosovo war.

15. (C) Sejdiu said he had no plans to meet with UN officials during his current visit to New York, but would likely seek a meeting with the Secretary-General when he returned for the March 23 debate on UNMIK. Kosovo welcomed the deployment of the EULEX rule of law mission in December 2008, but Sejdiu said he had rejected the SYG's six-point dialogue, which he thought had violated the Ahtisaari plan. He believed that Serbia was still trying to reopen the issue of Kosovo's

USUN NEW Y 00000208 002 OF 002

status, and he made clear that he would only discuss issues with Serbia "as two sovereign states." He hoped that the EULEX mission would be fully deployed by the end of March 2009, and that UNMIK would accelerate the pace of its drawdown. Kosovo had moved on to a new stage in its development, and was now focused on obtaining membership in the international financial institutions, attracting investment, and stabilizing Kosovo internally.

16. (C) Ambassador Rice encouraged President Sejdiu to maintain a broad view of Kosovo's relations with the UN beyond its relationship with DPKO. Long term cooperation with other UN agencies, such as UNDP, for example, could be beneficial for Kosovo.
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